

DETROIT INTERMODAL FREIGHT TERMINAL PROJECT
Draft Notes
Local Advisory Council Meeting
November 7, 2002, 7:00 p.m.
LA SED

Purpose: To cooperate with the Local Advisory Council as the Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal Project advances in the EIS phase.

Attendance: See attached.

Discussion:

Agenda Review:

Following introductions, Joe Corradino indicated that a facilitator was not present at the meeting and that he and Mohammed Alghurabi would facilitate the discussion. It was then asked if there were any changes to the agenda that had been sent before the meeting. None were suggested by the LAC. Then, a request was made for changes to the notes of the September 18 LAC meeting. There were none. So, the notes will be posted on the project Web site.

Key Issues From Scoping Meeting

Joe Corradino gave a brief overview of the scoping process. He then asked others who were in attendance at the September 19 meeting to comment. Don Cameron indicated he believed that the meeting was positive and that people are absorbing the information that is being presented.

Karen Kavanaugh indicated that she believed that many of the departments of the City of Detroit in attendance were not informed about the project or the process. She also indicated that holding the meeting during daytime does not meet the needs of the general public. She maintained that the larger community does not understand the process. Joe Corradino noted that the city agencies (and other agencies in the area) are briefed monthly on the project.

Reverend Archer asked Karen Kavanaugh about her concerns with the timing of the meeting. She responded by saying it was held during working hours when the local community could not be in attendance. Greg Gorno then indicated that the meeting was designed for agencies, not the local community. Therefore, he considered the workday setting appropriate. He also noted that he believed the scoping meeting was good and he now understood better how the project would operate. Joe Corradino noted that almost 200 community leaders and other interested parties had been advised of the scoping meeting. He also indicated that the public access television station had made a 10 to 15 minute piece that would be aired on Channel 10 in Detroit. Gerri Ayers indicated that she believed that MDOT had received substantial input as well as written comments through the scoping meeting and the ongoing scoping process.

Karen Kavanaugh asked if minutes were available of the scoping meeting. Joe Corradino indicated that a transcript had been compiled. However, because of faulty microphone equipment, the transcript had a number of blanks. Remedying that situation is what is delaying posting of notes for the scoping meeting on the project Web site.

Carmine Palombo noted that he had heard good comments at the scoping meeting from agencies representing public safety, particularly regarding hazardous waste spills. He asked whether the City of Detroit had provided written comments concerning the scoping process. Mohammed Alghurabi and Joe Corradino both noted that they had not seen those comments.

Jeff Edwards indicated that he believed the scoping meeting served its purpose but that the room in which it was conducted was bad for acoustics and lacked air conditioning.

Joe Corradino noted that the Detroit Public Schools had indicated some concerns at the scoping meeting. A visit was conducted with School Board representatives on November 4 to further define their concerns. As a result, noise and vibrations analyses would be undertaken near the school, particularly as it may be affected by the development of a truck-only road.

Mohammed Alghurabi indicated that no deadline has been set for submitting comments that affect scoping. He indicated that he saw no value in having a scoping meeting for the general public. Nevertheless, MDOT was willing to meet with groups large and small on the project. He noted that many of those who indicated they represent the public had submitted comments through the scoping process. Those comments covered a host of issues, but a number of them were repeated in many of the letters submitted.

Martha Gruelle, a meeting observer, asked if every comment or issue that had been raised through scoping is going to be analyzed. Joe Corradino referenced a matrix that was being compiled to list the comments so that they could be covered in the ongoing analysis and the environmental document. However, he noted that because a number of comments are similar from one person/group to another, they would be “bundled” and addressed as a single issue.

Karen Kavanaugh asked about other future public meetings. Joe Corradino and Gerri Ayers responded. It was noted that the next public meeting would likely be some time in January to review the status of data collection and analysis, particularly as affected by the scoping process. It was noted that the proposed January meeting would be of the public forum/workshop format.

Mickey Blashfield, a meeting observer, asked if the community had access to the scoping document on the Web. Joe Corradino responded that, to the best of his knowledge, the information had been on the Web for some time. (A check the next morning indicated that the scoping document was on the MDOT Web site).

Indirect/Cumulative Impacts

Joe Corradino explained the definition of Indirect (Secondary) and Cumulative effects. He also discussed how they would be analyzed for inclusion in the DEIS document. Discussion then ensued about the

synergistic effects of other projects being proposed for the general area. Reverend Archer, in this context, spoke of neighborhood concerns and rumors that have surfaced as a result of so many projects being “pointed” at Southwest Detroit. Reverend Archer asked if there were conversations taking place at various levels to coordinate these projects. Carmine Palombo responded that SEMCOG is in regular contact with the agencies that are involved in the projects. Additionally, he volunteered to provide supporting information including a Web site for each project.

Joe Corradino mentioned the Bi-National study concerning a new border crossing. He urged representatives of Southwest Detroit to attend the November 13 meeting at Cobo Hall to learn more about the plans in this area.

LAC Operating Procedures

The LAC was asked how it would like to operate. Marty Connour, an observer at the meeting, indicated that he believed the LAC seems to try to be “all things to all people.” He stressed that it should just focus on the agenda at hand. He indicated that there are a lot of businesses out there waiting to see where the DIFT project goes. In the case of his company, MARS, it wants to buy land to expand but cannot because other companies will not sell waiting for the DIFT decision to be made.

Mohammed Alghurabi suggested to the LAC members that providing input to the agenda would be of considerable help.

Don Cameron suggested that selecting a chairperson may be the correct first step in establishing operating procedures. The group agreed and Joe Corradino indicated that he would get a message out soliciting self nominations for the group.

Other

Karen Kavanaugh indicated that she still had not received case law dealing with the policy position established by Don Cameron/the Federal Highway Administration on railroad consolidation. Don indicated that he had provided all that is available.

Greg Gorno asked Karen what was the reason she needed the information. Karen responded she had been told on numerous occasions that the only way federal money could be used is through consolidation of all four railroads at one location. She wants to see the law that requires federal dollars to be restricted in that way. Don Cameron indicated that the process of focusing on the Detroit-Livernois Yard was one alternative. However, as far as the Federal Highway Administration is concerned, other alternative locations were to be considered. Mohammed Alghurabi indicated that Don’s position is a result of the input that is being received through the scoping process.

Martha Gruelle asked when the community will be advised of what other alternatives are being considered based on Don Cameron’s comment. Mohammed Alghurabi responded that a public forum would be the opportunity at which the changes in response to scoping would be made known to the public.

Karen Kavanaugh asked when that might be. No specific date was offered but Mohammed indicated that it would be as soon as possible.

Reverend Archer asked if the federal money could be used in more than one place. Don Cameron stated it could. Reverend Archer indicated that that was a different position than he had understood earlier.

Greg Gorno asked who decides the best alternative upon which to spend the federal money. It was indicated that MDOT makes a recommendation to FHWA at the end of the Environmental Impact Statement process. FHWA has the final sign-off through a document known as the Record of Decision.

Marty Connour asked what would happen if the City of Detroit doesn't endorse the final DIFT recommendation. Carmine Palombo indicated it was his opinion that MDOT would not build the DIFT, if the city's endorsement were lacking.

At this point, past Detroit City Council action was discussed including its position against Rail Strategy 3, as currently defined. Reverend Archer added that he believed the author of that resolution was not against the entire project but only opposed to Rail Strategy 3.

Karen Kavanaugh then requested that all four railroads and the auto manufacturing companies be represented at the next meeting to hear them express how this project would benefit each industry. Joe Corradino indicated that he had asked in the past that the railroads attend. Canadian National Railroad indicated that it would, but a representative has not attended an LAC meeting. Canadian Pacific Railroad declined to attend. Joe Corradino also noted that Marc Higginbotham represents NS and CSX at these meetings. Finally, Joe Corradino indicated that automobile company representatives had been invited to the meetings. At this time, none had decided to attend.

Joe Corradino discussed the involvement of railroads and the automobile companies that takes place each month at the DIFT Steering Committee meeting. He noted the meeting time and place (10:00 a.m. on the second Thursday of each month at the DEGC Headquarters). He indicated that Steering Committee meetings are open to the public and invited the Local Advisory Council members to attend. Karen Kavanaugh indicated she had obtained copies of the notes of some past Steering Committee meetings and that "there didn't seem to be much going on" at those meetings.

Karen Kavanaugh then asked questions concerning the acquisition area and the properties to be involved. The Southwest Detroit Business Association had received calls from concerned citizens who want to know if they are affected. Karen indicated that she believed there was some concern that St. Stephen's Church would be acquired. Joe Corradino stated that wasn't the case. However, the concern about St. Stephen's might have originated from the fact that St. Stephen's had been advised that interviews would be conducted in the area. Joe Corradino indicated that this early contact was likely the reason for the confusion about St. Stephen's involvement in the acquisition process.

Marc Higginbotham then discussed the short-term improvements that will be made by CSX and NS at the Detroit-Livernois Yard. He also noted his company and CSX were considering investing in the proposed Livernois Avenue Enhancement Project. He wondered whether the LAC could be a forum at which those

matters could be more fully discussed and if the LAC members could represent their respective constituencies in the discussion of short-term improvements at the Detroit-Livernois Yard area.

Marty Connour indicated that the bus tour conducted at the September 19 scoping meeting was very productive. He noted that there are a number of others that could benefit by such a presentation. He suggested that an additional tour be considered.

Marc Higginbotham mentioned that the Alameda Corridor Project could be a good example to be reviewed for the LAC.

With that comment, the next meeting of the LAC was set for December 17 at 7:00 p.m. The place is to be decided. The meeting adjourned at 9 PM.

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**Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal
Local Advisory Council Meeting
November 7, 2002**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Council Members		
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Rev. Steve Archer	Trinity	
Don Cameron	FHWA	517-702-1826
Greg Gorno	GORNO	734-281-1666
Marc Higginbotham	NS	248-351-2670
Karen Kavanaugh	CBRA	313-842-0986
Carmine Palombo	SEMCOG	313-961-4266
Observers		
Mickey Blashfield	CENTRA	586-939-7000
Marty Connour	MARS Ind.	313-841-1800
Martha Gruelle	SDEV	313-842-1961
Robert Hedges	Dearborn	313-943-2463
Alex Pollock	Detroit P&DD	313-224-1325
MDOT/Consultant Staff		
Geralyn Ayers	MDOT	517-335-2635
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